

Report from the Field

Farmers always complain about the weather, too hot, too cold, too dry, too wet. Well... this year it is too dry. In the last month the farm received about 2 inches of rain, where 4 is more the norm (May was similarly dry as well). We were hopeful last Thursday we'd get a deluge, but while Tolland/Willington got an inch, sunny Storrs received a dribble of 0.2 inches. We constantly hope that noaa.gov is going to give us some good news, *100% chance of showers today*. There is hope for later this week!

Overall the dry conditions haven't affected the crops we grow because every day we are watering something. If we didn't have a good well (fingers crossed) we'd be in big trouble. Virtually all of our crops are on drip irrigation, which reduces evaporative loss, but they still need water, with an inch of rain equivalent per week being a reasonable amount. The drip reduces what we need to apply, but consider this: an inch of rain that falls on an acre is roughly 24,000 gallons. We have about an acre in veggies (another acre in fruits), so if our irrigation system is running at 10 gallons per minute, we need to have it running 40 hours per week when it doesn't rain, just for the veggies. What a pain in the ... butt!

Many crops are on the way, the most exciting being tomatoes. This photo shows a lot of cherry tomatoes coming!



Cow Happenings

Mental picture of the month: your cow is running toward you at full speed, through your veggies, trips, and is sliding on her belly, limbs twisting in all kinds of contorted directions. This is what happened the other day when the calf got out. Frantic Momma Opal decided Ed wasn't being nice to her calf as he tried to catch it, and when the calf ran away from the pasture, Momma Opal decided to leap the electric fence. Being a happy herd, of course Auntie Jasmine had to follow suit. The smart thing to do at this point would have been to let them chill out for a minute, but Ed decided to grab Opal's halter head on and try having a tug of war match. Opal sized up her opponent, and with a mother's love on her side, showed him what 600 lbs of love can do. She decided to run through him toward her calf and Ed flipped over backwards, something he is still feeling the effects of.

That is when the cow farm tour began. Running through lettuces, carrots, blueberries, and the asparagus patch, but then, persuaded with a flailing person with a rake, to turn around and do the 100 meter dash. That was when Opal, came down with a crash, literally sliding across the ground. It didn't look good. Limbs are not supposed to be bent in all directions like that. But happily, Opal got up, and at a slower pace, walked through the carrots and lettuces (again). We were then able to get her on a lead rope and lead her, and the rest of the herd at the same time, back into the pasture.